

University of Mississippi

eGrove

Newsletters

American Institute of Certified Public
Accountants (AICPA) Historical Collection

5-1996

Accounting Educators: FYI, Volume 7, Number 5, May 1996

American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Academic and Career Development Division

Follow this and additional works at: https://egrove.olemiss.edu/aicpa_news



Part of the [Accounting Commons](#)



Accounting Educators:

Volume VII, Number 5 — May 1996

Beta Alpha Psi Partners with the AICPA

In this issue...

<i>Beta Alpha Psi Partners with the AICPA</i>	1
<i>1996 AICPA Accounting Educators Conference</i>	1
<i>AICPA Announces Top 15 Technologies for 1996</i>	2
<i>New Award Program to Recognize Academic and Practitioner Collaboration</i>	2
<i>Academic and Career Development Executive Committee Developing Education Strategy</i>	3
<i>CPA Exam Disclosure Now Limited</i>	3
<i>AICPA Considering Changes to CPA Exam</i>	3
<i>Innovative Teaching Practices</i>	4
<i>IMA Issues Practice Analysis</i>	4

The Beta Alpha Psi Board of Directors voted to form an alliance with the AICPA. The AICPA will assist Beta Alpha Psi in administering the operations for the national office of the honorary accounting fraternity, which has chapters at more than 200 colleges and universities nationwide. However, Beta Alpha Psi will retain its identity as a separate organization.

"We see this relationship as an incredible opportunity for the Beta Alpha Psi members and chapters," explained Penelope Yunker, incoming president of the organization. "The direction the AICPA is headed with regard to technology and marketing will enable the fraternity to grow and flourish." For example, the AICPA's Marketing Team will help Beta Alpha Psi promote itself to approximately 100 schools that are eligible for, but currently do not have, a Beta Alpha Psi chapter on campus.

Yunker envisions that the alliance will also help Beta Alpha Psi streamline many of its operational activities so that it can focus on new programs for the students. "We would like much of the correspondence between the national

office and chapters to be conducted electronically," she says. In addition, Beta Alpha Psi produces various publications that could be distributed via computer.

Beta Alpha Psi has between 8,000 and 9,000 student members in a given year who are required to participate in various activities for which the chapters earn points. Activities range from developing a chapter budget to making a presentation at the national or regional Beta Alpha Psi meetings. At the end of the academic year, the points are tallied and the more active chapters are designated as superior, distinguished or chapters of merit.

"The AICPA is committed to supporting Beta Alpha Psi, which has long represented the 'best and the brightest' among accounting students," said John Hunnicutt, AICPA senior vice president of the public affairs group. "These students are the future leaders of the profession. Strengthening Beta Alpha Psi will help serve them better which, in turn, will benefit all segments of the profession—whether in business and industry or public accounting." □

Reminder:

Mark your calendars for the upcoming **AICPA Accounting Educators Conference in Philadelphia, PA on November 15-16, 1996**. This year's program will cover technology in education, diversity, the case method and cutting-edge curriculum and teaching issues. Further program details and a registration form will be mailed to educators this summer.



From the Editor's Desk...

This issue includes some very important Institute news that will have a positive impact on accounting education and the profession as a whole. The Institute has partnered with Beta Alpha Psi, the premier accounting student fraternity. In addition, the AICPA is implementing a far-reaching education strategy to ensure that future CPAs are prepared to meet changing skill expectations.

This issue also includes descriptions of innovative teaching practices which address critical educational objectives. Featured innovations incorporate team building, technology applications, professional interaction, diversity and the development of problem-solving and communication skills. I hope that you find the descriptions of these creative teaching techniques both inspiring and informative.

Elizabeth Scifo Koch
Editor

AICPA Announces Top 15 Technologies for 1996

Each year, the AICPA Information Technology Practices and Research Subcommittees evaluate and select 15 technologies which are deemed to have the greatest impact on CPAs. CPAs need to be aware of these technologies in order to "just keep up" or even be on the "leading edge." The following describes each of these technologies for 1996 in order of impact.

1. **Image Processing** — the process of using scanning to connect paper images into electronic documents.
2. **Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)** — automatic electronic execution of routing business transactions between two or more business partners.
3. **Security (e.g., encryption, etc.)** — the policies, procedures and methods for assuring that access to information systems (IS) resources are restricted to authorized users and that IS resources will be available to the organization on an on-going basis.
4. **Electronic Commerce** — the means of doing business on the Internet.

5. **Communications Technologies** — the process of packaging and transmitting data, text, voice and/or video information among users.

6. **Workflow Technology** — automatically routing work or documents to the next person designated for handling the information.

7. **Area Networks** — computers at different locations linked by data communications technology to share computer resources.

8. **Collaborative Computing and Groupware** — the use of technology to bring together the thoughts or ideas of multiple workers.

9. **Cooperative and Client/Server Computing** — the distribution of processing functions between two or more computers.

10. **Intelligent Agents** — software programs that carry out customized instructions of their owners across multiple systems in a computer network.

11. **Business Process Reengineering** — a new approach to improving business processes that fuses information technology and continuous process improvement.

12. **Mail Technology—General** — various technologies available to shorten response time and enable business activity in a more timely and efficient manner.

13. **Expert Systems** — computer programs that incorporate a certain amount of expertise of knowledge derived from human sources.

14. **Quick Response** — a business strategy that attempts to identify and meet the demands of the customer by maximizing the efficiency of moving merchandise from raw material suppliers to customers, while at the same time reducing the amount of inventory in the merchandise pipeline.

15. **Telecommuting** — a business practice providing greater flexibility to the workforce with the potential of enabling people to work smarter and more efficiently.

New Award Program to Recognize Academic and Practitioner Collaboration

A new award program, the Joint AICPA/AAA Collaboration Award, has been established by the AICPA and AAA to recognize significant collaborative efforts between academics and practitioners that result in a direct contribution to accounting education, practice and/or research. This type of collaboration is seen as necessary in order to ensure that the profession and those entering it not only cope with change and survive, but thrive and flourish.

Activities that would qualify for the award include but are not limited to: developing and team teaching a new course; developing a case study or other teaching materials; developing or enhancing a CPE training program; developing a solution to a significant practice problem (in public practice, industry or government); developing a program/product to attract students into the profession or improve the early

employment experience and conducting a joint research project. The activity must be innovative, fully developed, implemented and ready for adoption by others. It should have either been disseminated or have the capability of being disseminated for implementation on a wider scale.

The collaboration must include: 1) an educator (not necessarily a CPA) or a team of educators and 2) a CPA practitioner (from public practice, industry or government) who is an AICPA member or a team of practitioners that includes an AICPA member.

A joint task force comprised of members of the AICPA and AAA will review and select the award-winning activity and will present an award of \$2,500 to the winner at the AICPA Accounting Educators Conference in November 1996. To obtain an application, please dial (201) 938-3787 from a fax machine and request document

number 654. Completed applications, including résumés and/or curriculum vitae for all participating academics and practitioners, must be received by **June 30, 1996**. For further assistance, please contact the AICPA at (212) 596-6224. □

Corrections

In the last issue of *FYI*, an error was made in citing one of the articles on the recommended reading list. The correct bibliographical entry is as follows:

Akers, Michael D., and Grover L. Porter, "Strategic Planning at Five World Class Companies," *Management Accounting* (July 1995), pp. 24-31.

Please also note a correction to the AICPA Library phone number. The correct number is (800) 862-4272, Option 7. *FYI* apologizes for any inconvenience these errors may have caused.

Academic and Career Development Executive Committee Developing Education Strategy

The Academic and Career Development Executive Committee (ACDEC) recently presented the AICPA Board of Directors with a strategy for the organization to influence change in business and accounting education to ensure that future CPAs are properly educated. The AICPA Board endorsed ACDEC's current programs but challenged ACDEC to design a new, imaginative and aggressive strategy to close the "ever-widening gap between education and practice," whether it be in industry or in public practice.

"We currently have a portfolio of high-quality programs to keep educators informed and up-to-date on the changing needs of the profession," said Bel Needles, ACDEC chair, "but the programs reach a limited number of educators. We need to do more and on a much wider scale to have a significant impact on education and make change happen."

As part of its strategic plan, the executive committee identified the following critical objectives that the AICPA will continue to address:

- Facilitate changes in educational processes and content in order to provide the fundamental information technology skills that will form the foundation for successful accounting professionals in the future.
- Incorporate the concept of the CPA as a business advisor and an entrepreneurial thinker into the education process.
- Integrate the functional areas of financial accounting, auditing, tax, managerial and systems and reflect the interface between business issues and accounting topics.
- Assist faculty in addressing the issue of diversity in the classroom. With the increase in the use of teams in the workplace, diversity becomes an even more critical issue. Enabling faculty to suc-

cessfully use teams in the classroom—in the context of a diverse group of people—will enhance the learning environment and better prepare students for the changing workplace.

The executive committee is in the process of formulating specific action plans to improve educators' access to AICPA technology products and other resources, to ensure the availability of teaching materials on major developments in the profession as they occur and to identify and disseminate information on "best practices" in curriculum design and delivery. By strengthening alliances with other organizations, the AICPA can avoid duplication of efforts and leverage products and services to educators. A key goal is to enhance communication and interaction with educators, and between educators and practitioners, so the education process will be more responsive to the changing marketplace. □

CPA Exam Question Disclosure Now Limited

Effective May 1996, the CPA Exam will maintain a secure, nondisclosed bank of questions that have already appeared on an Exam. By keeping the CPA Exam questions secure after an Exam is administered, the AICPA can keep the difficulty level and passing grade more consistent from administration to administration through the ability to pretest and reuse questions.

Unauthorized disclosure of CPA Exam questions is prohibited. This means that students, university professors and CPA exam preparation instructors will be limited in what they can share about questions that appear on the Uniform CPA Exam. For example, educators cannot use nondisclosed CPA Exam questions in class discussion or examinations. Candidates cannot discuss specific questions with others, including educators. It should be noted, however, that pre-1996 questions will continue to be freely licensed by the

AICPA. CPA candidates, CPA Exam administrators, proctors and others who have legitimate access to nondisclosed CPA Exam questions will also be required to sign a nondisclosure agreement. Anyone who discloses secured CPA Exam questions will be subject to prosecution under federal copyright statutes and possibly under state laws. For AICPA members, disclosure of CPA Exam questions will also result in a violation of ethical rules. For CPA candidates, disclosure may also be grounds for denial of admission to the CPA Exam or licensure.

In order to clarify the parameters of nondisclosure, the AICPA Board of Examiners and staff have made available a set of questions and answers which cover several, but not all, situations. For a complete set of these questions and answers, dial (201) 938-3787 from a fax machine and request document number 141. □

AICPA Board of Directors Considering Exam Changes

At a recent meeting, the AICPA Board of Directors discussed the current topics covered by the CPA Exam and the appropriateness of those topics given the ever-changing skill sets required by the profession. The issue of revising the substantive areas of the Exam has become increasingly important since the profession is no longer dominated by individuals performing the attest function. However, as a regulatory tool, the Exam focuses on the skills required to perform the attest function. Some AICPA members believe the Exam should focus on the broader skill set required for members in industry, consulting and tax. *FYI* will keep you informed on further developments regarding the CPA Exam as they arise.

Innovative Teaching Practices

Many educators contributed examples of innovative teaching practices in response to *FYI's* recent request to share ideas. This type of information exchange is valuable as

educators continually seek new ways to meet changing teaching demands. Below are brief descriptions of several of the innovative practices submitted.

Steve Smith, West Virginia University, and Connie Groer, Frostburg University, have developed an innovative Internet project which helps students develop team building, critical thinking and communication skills. As part of the requirements of a governmental accounting course, students at both universities teamed up to solve real-world governmental accounting problems submitted by accounting practitioners. The team members on each campus established a home page at an off-campus site and communicated with each other through e-mail. Files were uploaded and downloaded to the team's Web site as necessary to develop answers to the practice problems. The students also used the Internet's worldwide resources to research and formulate their answers. For information, contact Steve Smith at smithg@wvubel.be.wvu.edu.

Doug Love and Jim Moon of Illinois State University have coordinated the Internet Student Portfolio Project which enables students to create a hyper media portfolio of their educational experience at Illinois State University. The system allows students to combine text, sound, video and images into an organized, hyper-linked collection of World Wide Web documents that shows how each student is uniquely integrating career planning, formal classroom work and student life activities. The portfolio's main objective is to provide students with a career plan-

ning tool and is easily accessed by mentors, advisors and faculty. It is also accessible to recruiters who can browse the "Interview" and "Résumé" sections and get students' responses to commonly asked interview questions. For more information, contact Doug Love at (309) 438-7751.

Charles Malone and Lynn Griffin report that the North Carolina A&T State accounting faculty have developed a professional presentation series whereby Principles of Accounting students hear from real-world role models and gain an awareness of the business world and skills needed to be successful. Students must attend a minimum of 2 of the 5 to 10 professional presentations offered each semester. Volunteer speakers with diverse ethnic and gender backgrounds from private industry, government, not-for-profit, accounting firms, law and entrepreneurship have spoken on a wide variety of topics. Overall, the program has been well received by students and the cooperating companies, with the most popular topics including personal career development, accounting careers and the role of accounting in the organization. For more information, contact Chuck Malone at (910) 334-7581, x 6007.

D. Larry Crumbley, Texas A&M University, L. Murphy Smith, Texas A&M University, and Katherine T. Smith, Business Consultant have developed an innovation termed the "scenario approach." The scenario approach is designed to generate stu-

dent enthusiasm for course materials through the use of educational novels or student role-playing videotape presentations. The enthusiasm helps students learn. The goal of the scenario approach is to place students in the role of an investigator rather than a passive recipient of information. Research indicates that applications of the scenario approach have enhanced students' communication and interpersonal skills, stimulated students' creativity and enabled instructors to improve their teaching performance. For more information, contact Larry Crumbley at (409) 845-4884.

Thomas A. Jones, DeVry Institute of Technology requires students to create computer spreadsheets to resolve business issues and apply "what if" scenarios. This assignment differs from more traditional computer applications which utilize textbook-supplied disks. In contrast, the required programming of templates enhances the students skills in terms of using the computer for modeling and decision making in the business environment. Students are instructed in computer labs offered concurrently with a major accounting subject and are taught by the same professor who teaches the primary course. Critical to the success of this innovation is the utilization of the spreadsheet assignment for creative problem-solving skills which often require manipulations of numbers and decision making.

IMA Issues Practice Analysis

In March 1996, the IMA issued a report entitled, *The Practice Analysis of Management Accounting*, as a tool for curriculum change. This report is the result of a survey conducted to determine what management accountants actually do and the knowledge, skills and abilities they need to be successful. It also anticipates the work that

management accountants will perform in the future. The report is based on responses of more than 800 practicing management accountants, from entry level to chief financial officer.

The following types of knowledge, skills and abilities were identified as most important for anybody working as a management accountant: work

ethic; listening skills; use of computerized spreadsheets; analytical problem-solving skills; interpersonal skills and the relationship between the balance sheet, income statement and cash flow statement. The entire report and database of findings will be available on the IMA Home Page on the Rutgers Accounting Web on the Internet. □